

1 WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

5 1. A method for substituting alternative video and/or audio signals and/or graphics and/or text to be displayed on the viewer's television display monitor in the place of the video and/or audio signals that would otherwise be displayed according to the channel to which the viewer has tuned the television set, the television set including an electronic program guide, the method comprising the steps of:

10 maintaining at a head end provider viewer profile data based on user interactions with the electronic program guide;

15 monitoring at the head end provider an outgoing television signal for a first particular channel;

20 identifying the point in said outgoing television signal at which said signal begins to carry advertising information;

25 inserting in said outgoing television signal on said first particular channel an instruction to any television that receives said television signal to change channels to a second particular channel;

30 receiving said television signal at a viewer's television set on said first particular channel;

recognizing said instruction at said viewer's television set to change channels;

35 determining whether the television set is operating in an electronic program guide mode;

tuning said viewer's television set to said second particular channel if the television set is operating in the electronic program guide mode; and

tuning said viewer's television set to said first particular channel.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said instruction to change channels includes a duration of time and the television

1 set is tuned to the second particular channel for said duration
of time.

5 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the second channel is
an advertisement channel providing advertisement information.

10 4. The method of claim 3 further comprising the step of
displaying the advertisement information on a pre-determined
portion of the electronic program guide.

15 5. A system for substituting alternative video and/or
audio signals and/or graphics and/or text to be displayed on the
viewer's television display monitor in the place of the video
and/or audio signals that would otherwise be displayed according
to the channel to which the viewer has tuned the television set,
the television set including an electronic program guide, the
system comprising:

20 means for maintaining at a head end provider viewer profile
data based on user interactions with the electronic program
guide;

means at the head end provider to monitor an outgoing
television signal for a first particular channel;

25 means to identify the point in said outgoing television
signal at which said signal begins to carry advertising
information;

30 means to insert in said outgoing television signal on said
first particular channel an instruction to any television that
receives said television signal to change channels to a second
particular channel;

means to receive said television signal on said first
particular channel;

means for determining whether the television set is
operating in an electronic program guide mode;

1 means at a viewer's television set to tune to said second particular channel if the television set is operating in the electronic program guide mode; and

5 means at said viewer's television set to tune to said first particular channel.

10 6. The system of claim 5, wherein the instruction to change channels includes a duration of time and the television set is tuned to the second particular channel for said duration of time.

15 7. The system of claim 5, wherein the second channel is an advertisement channel providing advertisement information.

20 8. The system of claim 7 further comprising means for displaying the advertisement information on a pre-determined portion of the electronic program guide.

25 9. A method for replacing television signals in a television system including a television set and an electronic program guide, the method comprising:

maintaining a plurality of advertisement channels, each advertisement channel providing different advertisement information;

collecting viewer profile data based on user interactions with the electronic program guide;

selecting an advertisement channel based on the collected viewer profile data;

30 monitoring an outgoing television signal for a particular television channel;

identifying a point in the outgoing television signal for transmitting advertisement information;

35 inserting in the outgoing television signal for the particular television channel an instruction to change channels;

1 tuning to the particular television channel;
receiving the instruction to change channels;
determining whether the television set is operating in an
5 electronic guide mode; and

tuning to the selected advertisement channel for a duration
of the advertisement carried by the selected advertisement
channel if the television set is operating in the electronic
guide mode.

10 10. The method of claim 9 further comprising collecting
viewer profile data based on user interactions with the
television system.

15 11. The method of claim 9 further comprising transmitting
the collected viewer profile data to a head end provider.

20 12. The method of claim 9 wherein the instruction to change
channels comprises an instruction to change to the selected
advertisement channel.

25 13. The method of claim 9 further comprising:
receiving a user command to change to a specific television
channel prior to the expiration of the duration of the
advertisement carried by the selected advertisement channel;
tuning to the specific television channel; and
remaining tuned to the specific television channel after the
expiration of the duration of the advertisement.

30 14. The method of claim 9 further comprising displaying the
advertisement information on a pre-determined portion of the
electronic program guide.

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15. The method of claim 9 further comprising tuning to the particular television channel at an expiration of the duration of the advertisement.

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16. A system for replacing television signals in a television system including a television set and an electronic program guide, the system comprising:

10 means for maintaining a plurality of advertisement channels, each advertisement channel providing different advertisement information;

means for collecting viewer profile data based on user interactions with the electronic program guide;

15 a head end monitor monitoring an outgoing television signal for a particular television channel and inserting an instruction to change channels at a point in the outgoing television signal where advertisement information is to be transmitted;

20 a television signal receiver including a tuner tuning to the particular television channel, the receiver receiving the instruction to change channels;

25 a microprocessor coupled to the television signal receiver, the microprocessor determining whether the television set is operating in an electronic guide mode and causing the tuner to tune to the selected advertisement channel for a duration of the advertisement carried by the selected advertisement channel if the television set is operating in the electronic guide mode.

30 17. The system of claim 16 further comprising means for collecting viewer profile data based on user interactions with the television system.

35 18. The system of claim 16 further comprising means for transmitting the collected viewer profile data to a head end provider.

1 19. The system of claim 16 further comprising:
 a user input device for selecting a specific television
channel for viewing;

5 wherein the microprocessor causes the tuner to tune to the
specific television channel upon receipt of the user selection
prior to the expiration of the duration of the advertisement
carried by the selected advertisement channel and remain tuned
to the specific television channel after the expiration of the
10 duration of the advertisement.

15 20. The system of claim 16 wherein the microprocessor
causes the advertisement carried by the selected advertisement
channel to be displayed on a pre-determined portion of the
electronic program guide.

20 21. The system of claim 16, wherein the microprocessor
causes the tuner to tune to the particular television channel at
an expiration of the duration of the advertisement.

25 22. A television system including a television set and an
electronic program guide for replacing television signals, the
system comprising:

 means for collecting viewer profile data based on user
interactions with the electronic program guide;

 a television signal receiver including a tuner tuning to the
particular television channel, the receiver receiving an
instruction to change channels;

30 a memory storing advertisement schedule information for a
plurality of advertisements, the information including a channel
designation for each of the advertisements;

35 a microprocessor coupled to the memory and the television
signal receiver, the microprocessor determining whether the
television set is operating in an electronic guide mode,
selecting an advertisement channel based on the collected viewer

1 profile data if the television set is operating in electronic
guide mode, and causing the tuner to tune to the advertisement
channel for a duration of the advertisement carried by the
5 selected advertisement channel.

23. The system of claim 22 further comprising means for
collecting viewer profile data based on user interactions with
the television system.

10 24. The system of claim 22, wherein the microprocessor
causes the advertisement carried by the selected advertisement
channel to be displayed on a pre-determined portion of the
electronic program guide.

15 25. The system of claim 22, wherein the microprocessor
causes the tuner to tune to tune to the particular television
channel at an expiration of the duration of the advertisement.

20 26. A system for replacing television signals, the system
comprising:

a television signal receiver including a tuner tuning to a
first television channel, the receiver receiving an instruction
to change channels to a second channel;

25 a display monitor for displaying an electronic program guide
while in an electronic program guide mode;

a processor coupled to the television signal receiver and
display monitor, characterized in that the processor determines
whether the display monitor is displaying the electronic program
guide in the electronic program guide mode, causes the tuner to
30 tune to the second channel upon receipt of the instruction to
change channels if the display monitor is displaying the
electronic guide in the electronic program guide mode, and
further causes the display monitor to display content carried by

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1 the second channel on a pre-determined portion of the electronic
program guide.

5 27. A system for replacing television signals, the system
comprising:

a television signal receiver including a tuner tuning to a
first television channel;

10 a display monitor displaying contents of the first
television channel;

a memory storing an indicia indicating whether contents of
the first television channel displayed on the display monitor are
to be replaced; and

15 a processor coupled to the signal receiver, display, and
memory, characterized in that the processor checks the indicia
to determine whether the contents of the first television channel
displayed on the display monitor are to be replaced, and replaces
the displayed contents with a second content if the indicia
indicates that the displayed contents are to be replaced.

20 28. The system of claim 27, wherein the second content is
an advertisement selected based on user profile information.